

Rhode Island State Conservation Committee Minutes

Date: October 14, 2015

Start: 10:10 am

Location: NRCS Conference Room, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI 02886

Attendees: **RISCC members** - Maria Mack (Chair), Paul Dolan (NRICD), Clarkson Collins (SRICD), Emerson Wildes (ERICD), Ken Ayars (RIDEM); **Advisors**- Dick Went (RIACD); Phou Vongkhamdy (USDA, NRCS), Beverly Migliore (RIDEM), Jean Lynch (RIACD), Paul Gonsalves (RISPP), Harriet Powell (RIRC&D); **Guests** - Gina DeMarco (NRCID), Kate Bousquet, (SRICD); Eric Scherer (RISCC interim project coordinator); Michael Viola, Civil Engineering Technician (RISCC); Sara Churgin (RISCC Project Coordinator)

I. Welcome and Introductions – Maria Mack, Chair welcomed everyone and several attendees introduced themselves to the group. Several agenda items were asked to be added to the agenda under item V. New Business, Item B. by Jean Lunch on the annual dinner location, Item C. to establish a Financial Subcommittee to work on fiscal policy and procedures and Item D. Discuss status of staffing for RISCC..

II. Introduction of Project Coordinator – Sara Churgin was introduced to the group.

III. Review and Approve Minutes of August 19, 2015 – Ken Ayars suggested “respectfully submitted” should be added to the end of the Minutes.

Motion was made by Paul Dolan to add, “respectfully submitted”, seconded by Ken Ayars and passed unanimously.

IV. Review and Approve Financial Reports (September 30, 2015)

Motion was made E. Wilde to hire Alan Horenstein to clean up the RISCC books; seconded by P. Dolan; passed unanimously.

Motion was made by E. Wilde to accept Financials. Seconded by P. Donald; passed unanimously.

V. Old Business

A. Approve FFOS Farm Designation protocol – E. Scherer presented this plan and it was decided the three districts and E. Scherer should meet to discuss this document further and get it in its final format for Board approval at its next meeting November 12, 2015.

Action Item: E. Scherer to meet with the three district managers to discuss final edits on this document in order to present it to the board November 12, 2015 for final approval.

B. Approve FFOS Open Space Recommendations

Motion was made by Clarkson Collins to change terminology on Briefing Paper, page 3, number 1, under “RECOMMENDATIONS” to read “...to update the methodology and update soil ranking classification for FFOS.” Seconded by Paul Dolan and passed

unanimously.

C. Action Register – E. Scherer asked that all members please review the register to make certain all items have been addressed.

D/E. Signing Ceremony of National (state level) NRCS/RI Partnership MOU took place. Pictures were taken. 7 copies were signed. Ken Ayres said Director of the DEM, Janet Coit, might also sign the document.

VI. New Business

A. FY 2015/16 RISCC Calendar – Sara Churgin requested that all members bring their 2016 calendars to the next meeting in order to schedule the Board meetings for the entire year. She also asked the members to think about whether they want to continue meeting monthly, on what day of the week do they want to meet and do they want to stay monthly or switch to every two months.

B. RI Foundation Grant Award “RI State Conservation Committee Organizational Development Project – E. Scherer discussed this grant and how it has been awarded to RISCC. It is the Project Coordinator’s (Sara Churgin) job to implement what needs to be done pursuant to the grant, with input from RISCC resources. The grant award is \$7500 and the projected timeline is November 2015-October 2016.

Action Item: Sara Churgin will implement the grant’s goal of developing a plan to assist in increasing the overall effectiveness and improving operations of the RISCC and the three RI Conservation Districts. She will enlist help from RISCC resources.

C. Meeting with Director – Maria Mack and Dick Went met with the Director and she confirmed that the RISCC is a state agency which is part of the DEM.

VII. Members and Advisors Reports

A. RI DEM – Ken Ayars updated members on work at the DEM.

B. ERICD – E. Wildes provided a verbal update based upon last board meeting.

C. NRICD – Written update provided by staff and comments by P. Dolan were made on status of various programs and initiatives.

D. SRICD – Kate Bosquet updated the members on work at the SRICD.

E. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services – P. Vongkhamdy updated members on work at the NRCS.

F. RI Association of Conservation Districts – D. Went updated members on work at the RIACD.

G. RI Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc. – P. Dolan discussed the small scale forestry project.

H. RI Statewide Planning Program – P. Gonzalez updated members on work at RISPP.

VI. Motion to Adjourn at 12:34 pm

Respectfully submitted by Sara Churgin, Project Coordinator for RISCC